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ABSTRACT

The introductory section of the conference proceedings contains two essays. "Crossing Borders: Some Values To Declare" (Julian Edge) is a personal statement about cultural diversity, offering personal perspectives as a teacher of English as a Second Language and the perspectives of several colleagues of different cultural backgrounds and professional experience. It is suggested that at the heart of language teaching is a set of core values that honor diversity, inquiry, and cooperation. Contains 10 references. "Opening Borders with World Englishes: Theory in the Classroom" (Braj B. Kachru) offers arguments in favor of using world varieties of English as a resource for intercultural communication and for crossing cultural, linguistic, ethnic, adn social barriers among populations. A number of areas in which a paradigm shift must occur to accomplish this are outlined. Contains a total of 60 references. (MSE)

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# *Section One*
# Introduction

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# Crossing borders: Some values to declare

**Julian Edge**
*Aston University*

I know that many of you will recognise the music that was playing before this talk began: it was a track from the 1989 Ryuichi Sakomoto album, Beauty. The music crossed many borders in the making and has crossed many more in being played. The musicians are from Japan, the USA, and Senegal (at least), and I think that Mexico and Britain are involved, too. With nine hours difference between Japan and Britain, I found the the 'Good Morning/Good Evening' lyric irresistible. And as for, 'Where are you?', the question has been much in my mind of late concerning my family and I've asked it once or twice of myself as I've woken up in beds at several points from Sapporo on south during my exhilarating 'Four Corners of Japan' tour.

The music is meant as an illustration and as a metaphor. It also provides me with a context in which to say that when I heard that the theme of this year's JALT Conference was to be Crossing Borders, my heart sang. I do hope that that response is as widely reported as my now infamous remark on the conference theme, 'Back to Basics' of two years ago, when I admitted that my heart sank.

The idea of border-crossing resonates at so many levels and in so many ways: the physical, the cultural, the political, the geographical, the psychological, the social, the personal - and that is without even beginning to consider what might be seen as the core, professional borders of language and pedagogic style which we cross daily in our necessarily cross-cultural TESOL activities.

Honoured as I am by the invitation to speak to conference as a whole, I see it as a responsibility to attempt to address this many-faceted theme. Before I do, however, let us spend a few more moments in consideration of the function and force of this talk of mine. What is the point of plenary talks? What are you hoping for from this one? What are you expecting? Please take just thirty seconds of our time together to think about it.

Let me now give you my perspective. I have been involved in TESOL since 1969. Typical of my age and nationality, I entered TESOL without proper training and with no real sense of vocation for teaching as a career. In defence of that dual admission, I think it is fair to say that not many people had much of a clue at that time about what a proper training for TESOL might look like, and that the passing time has shown quite clearly and sometimes cruelly that the idea of a "career" in TESOL is not something that a person like myself should rely on. There has been a succession of fixed-term jobs punctuated by relatively short periods of unemployment. I have been lucky.

When I sketch that background, I identify myself as one of those people who have earned a living travelling from one country to another, working in other people's education systems. This is a background which some people here will be able to relate to easily, and some not. All we can do at this point is to be clear about that fact, and hope that the clarity helps people with very different backgrounds decide to what extent what I have to say is of interest or relevance to them.

I am trying to put into practice here a lesson I learnt over many years. At one stage of my work, I did indeed go to other people's countries and tell them how they should teach English. Some were enthusiastic about what they heard. When

they were not, I took their lack of enthusiasm for the methodological suggestions I brought as a lack of understanding, or lack of vision, or lack of desire to keep up with the times. I don't do that anymore.

I find that my statements have lost their "should". I find that I am much more committed to trying to understand the way things are, and in showing how I (and sometimes others) have gone about finding out how things are, for ourselves, in different places, at different times. I am committed to the idea of development; I am also convinced that we have, in the past, too frequently concentrated on new goals and directions, without paying enough attention to the building of a proper understanding of the way things actually are, from our own perspectives, and from the perspectives of those with whom we live and work. The next step in our own appropriate development will arise from that understanding, and is neither feasible nor desirable without it.

Let me also say, in passing, that I have enough of a sense of self-irony to hear in what I am saying the difference between the opinions of a young man and a middle-aged man. Quite certainly. That is who I am. That is what I have to offer. All this is really quite insidious. No one can put up resistance to this, because I'm not suggesting anything. Everyone has to take full responsibility for deciding whether what I have to say is of use or relevance to them - and they are all right.

This talk is in that mode. I am going to give your theme my best shot. And then it's up to you. This isn't about generalisations, or generalisability, this is personal.

I want to pick up two aspects of the border-crossing theme: one is a personal/professional narrative, and the other is a geographical/cultural meditation. As you would expect, and because our discourse expectations speak us, just as we speak them, I shall bring the two themes together at the end of the talk.

## A personal/professional narrative

I'm 48 now. Born a Rat on the first day of the Year of the Rat, 10 February 1948. Nineteen forty-eight. That's a long time ago. The first twelve-year cycle of this particular Rat was as a child in the post-war industrial midlands of England. It was all about being a child in a loving family.

The second cycle was about getting an education the like of which no one in my family had ever had. Those were probably the most difficult borders I ever crossed, because there was no one to come back and warn me about the particular rites of passage involved, and I wasn't mature or sophisticated enough to know about the available records, from Great Expectations to Room at the Top. I remember very clearly losing my childhood, neighbourhood friends because I passed the examination for the clever ones, and went to the posh school on the other side of the city. And I remember particularly well one teacher who made fun of those of us who gave away, when we spoke, just where we came from. It is only with hindsight that I select a coherence for this narrative, but it provides for me a strong, personal reminder of the losses and hurt involved in some border-crossings which one does not, at the same time, in any way regret. The resonances with foreign language learning are clear to me. The challenge is to extend one's identity without losing it. That is also where and when I learned about the value of unconditional love, as my parents supported me through the outcomes of my decisions, right and wrong, about issues none of us understood too well.

The third cycle was about learning to be a husband. It also brought me well into TESOL and becoming, first, a language teacher, then a language teacher who wanted to investigate more about what it was that I had gotten into, and then a language teacher involved in teacher training. It was also about learning to live in different countries and cultures, thus acquiring a perspective on, and a dislocation from, my own country and culture which has remained with me. This feeling was captured for me very powerfully recently by a short poem of Earl Stevick's (1996) which I'd like to read to you:

> In firelight all of us sat
> down together, spoke
> without holding back our
> thoughts, either our first

thoughts or our deepest.
The ashes cooled till we
could sift them through
our fingers.
Then in the new morning
sun we stretched and stood
to take our homeward
paths but found not one.

My fourth cycle was very much to do with learning to be a father. It was spent living in Britain and travelling from it, and I was striving to live, in Edward Said's (1993:385) expression, not in the nation, but in the world. I discovered action research, and realised that that term captured my aspirations to forge understanding out of practice. It helped me make sense of my conviction that, as teachers, we do not need theories to apply in practice, so much as we need ways to explore and understand - to theorise, in fact - what our experience is trying to teach us. I stopped seeing academics as necessarily useless wallies, because I realised that some people now saw me as an academic.

And I have a reasonably clear view of the sixth cycle. I honestly feel that, all things being equal, I shall want to find out much more about gardening before I get too old to do it.

You may have noticed that I missed out the fifth cycle. That is now. That's what makes it difficult. We can reinvent the past, through the mysterious, constructive process known as memory, in order to make it and ourselves coherent. We can do the same for the future, through the mysterious, constructive process known as imagination. But the present makes different demands, and I want to face up to them. with you. now.

In one version of this story, I have crossed professional borders from being a teacher, to being a teacher trainer, to being an academic. I acknowledge that version of the story, although it doesn't feel like that to me. I live more happily in a version of my role more like the one a graduate of our master's program at Aston sent me just before I left Britain a few weeks ago. He said that now he was more involved in teacher training, he found that the work we had done together on our own development as teachers was having a definite effect. It was as though there were an unbroken chain between his work with me, his work with the teachers, and their work with their learners.

The continuity expressed there is one that I relate to, because it coheres to what I have elsewhere (Edge 1996b) called the development parameter. What is important to me in my narrative is that it should be a continuing story of personal and professional empowerment; the borders which other people's tellings impose on my life interest me, they may describe me, but they don't express me.

Let me focus for a few minutes on this term, Empowerment. It is, I know, a rather passé term in some circles, and it has certainly been more abused than some. Let me say a few words about what I mean by it:

My best attempt to break down the composite meaning of empowerment produces four aspects: authority, ability, responsibility and respect.

By authority, I don't mean power over others, I mean to emphasise the 'author' part of the word. I mean making sure that I am doing what I can in my context to be the author of my own life.

In order to do this increasingly, I want to improve my abilities in those areas where I feel that my growth will enhance my sense of self-authorship.

This growth must take place in a way which is socially responsible and, as I take on more responsibility for my actions, I also want to claim more responsibility for their outcomes, which I need to inform myself about.

As I come to formulate my own decisions, and find my own way, I do so in the realisation that my right to reach personal conclusions can be protected only by a respect for the rights of others to reach different conclusions.

There is no issue here of hierarchies of status of employment. That is not what empowerment, as I am using the term, is about. My empowerment might have taken many forms; some of them would have involved my remaining committed to full-time language teaching, and some of them would have meant my leaving language teaching altogether. Nor am I saying that empowerment necessarily involves some

kind of action research, or that an investigative approach to teaching is the best way to be a teacher. I am observing that, as a person-who-teaches, this search for ongoing empowerment is one way of living. (I have to note in passing that Huberman's (e.g. 1989) research into teachers' lives suggests that it is those teachers who have neither stuck to what they learned in early training, nor become involved in radical experiments who reach the end of their working lives with the greatest sense of satisfaction, and the least signs of burnout or cynicism. These are the people who have quietly "tinkered" with their teaching, sometimes questioning the ends and always trying out variations on the means.)

Intellectually, if we are attracted by the domain of academic debate, we can see this position as being in tune with post-modern thinking about the human situation. We have turned away from the search for grand explanations of life, the universe, and everything (including Second Language Acquisition), and work rather as intellectual/cultural bricoleurs, improvising responses in situations which need to be understood from the inside. As Gore (1993:49) puts it:

> ..... It seems to me that there is something about the educational enterprise that leads to the local, partial, and multiple foci of poststructural theories: there is something about the lives of those in classrooms, as well as the lives of social "classes", about activities that deal with people as thinking, feeling individuals, that requires the phenomenological, personal accounts of multiplicity and contradiction that are beginning to emerge in the work of feminist poststructuralists in education.

At the same time, we do not have to approach our teaching only, or perhaps even most importantly, as an intellectual issue. At the heart of this work are the values that we express in the work that we do. I should like to suggest that some of those core values are, for me at least, connected with issues of: Diversity, Inquiry and Cooperation.

Diversity . . . because we have ceased to believe that there is a single best way of learning a foreign language, or of teaching one - not because of a failure of method or of research, but because it is a wild goose chase, a misunderstanding of what is involved, the wrong question.

Inquiry . . . because this absence of a single best way commits us to the idea of continually investigating our work in order to try to understand it better.

Cooperation . . . because in order to increase one's understanding of a human process, such as teaching, one needs to cooperate as closely as possible with the people involved in that process: our students and colleagues.

And, once again, this approach can be built only in a context of respect for others, whose diverse cooperative investigations will lead them onto different paths.

Here is where I have to shift from a focus on personal/professional issues to geographical/cultural ones.

## A geographical/cultural meditation

How well do these values which we have discussed cross geographical and cultural borders? Let me share with you some reports from teachers in different settings. They are all teachers with whom I have worked over the last few years. I asked them to comment on their experiences in response to the question: To what extent is an approach based on self-development and respect for individual difference appropriate across cultures?

What I want to show you today are some extracts from the raw data of initial responses. They are not interpreted, or part of an argument as such. Nor are they comfortably positive. I offer them here because they do allow the voices of these teachers into this discourse, and give at least an indication of the reality of the question to people who teach and come to terms with their lives in different parts of the world. As you listen to them, I invite you to use your imagination and your understanding, and to try to see things the way they do.

### From eastern Europe, two responses from westerners working there:

1. As a teacher, I do not think one can pronounce oneself committed to non-

interference in another's belief system; merely stating new facts, one's opinion, or making new information available, interferes . . . . .

Within the first year of teaching here, I strongly believed my "learner autonomy" approach did not suit all learners and, as my colleague began to teach in the same way, I felt some pupils suffered. It threatened their security and disempowered them. She later reverted and again some pupils suffered for being too honest, although she had encouraged it. . . . . .

I have given up speaking out, withdrawn into myself and do not even do my own thing to my own satisfaction.

2. So this was a bit of a paradox. New methodology was seen largely as ideas and gimmicks, rather than a real shift of responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learner. In a culture where personal responsibility has for so long been anathema, there is a large degree of ambivalence: Yes, give us the new, but only at a shallow level, because we are used to being able to blame others if things don't work.

**From an Irish person working on the western European mainland:**

In my own context, I feel that the greatest threat to teacher development are the economic forces which are leading schools to cut educational corners and emphasise the "service industry" aspect of EFL. We are being led (?) further away from mainstream education into a vicious competition for students (customers) with at the same time an erosion of teachers' salaries and working conditions. Professional self-development will understandably take a back seat if teachers feel that they are being exploited and that they cannot aspire to a quality of life commensurate with their qualifications and contribution to society.

**From a Chinese teacher educator returned to China:**

The rough picture I've got in my mind now is a three-stage program: General Lecture stage, Group Seminar stage, and Cooperative Development stage.

During the first stage, some open lectures covering a wide range of topics were given mainly by the British lecturer on the project and attended by all the departmental staff who were interested in those topics. . . . . .

The second stage tended to move away from an all-purpose lecture form to some more concentrated areas. Usually, teachers who taught the same course or had the same interest met in small groups to discuss in detail things they were all concerned about. At this stage, the input, or resource, was not only provided by the "foreign expert" but also the returned Chinese counterparts who had been trained in Britain. . . . . .

Now, it's time for the third stage, Cooperative Development At this final stage of the teacher education program, the format is narrowed down from a small group to an individual. . . . . During the third stage, teachers would like to go even deeper into some specific issues which they may not want to share with too many people, but just one or two whom they trust and would like to talk over in depth.

**And from an American, long-term resident in Japan:**

I was in Kenya this summer and had a conversation with a Japanese man living in Nairobi and an Englishwoman visiting from where she is living in Japan. So all of us were ex-pats. The concept of universal values came up and I was amazed to find the Japanese man so "tolerant" towards other cultures that he could condone ANY behaviour based on the cultural context (it began with wife-beating). My self-confidence wavered for an instant as I questioned my own level of "I'm OK, you're OK". And then I thought, NO! There IS such a thing as absolute WRONG regardless of culture. Who is wrong, the western doctor who refuses to circumcise an African adolescent female, or the mother who demands the surgery? Is the doctor culturally insensitive or humanistic? . . . . .

The issues are not simple, nor do I quote these individuals in order either to agree or disagree with them. They are authentic individual statements, not generalisations, from the voices of committed professionals involved in the struggle for values they believe in, while

trying to understand the contexts in which they work. As such, they demand respect.

What they also make very clear is the way in which considerations of values impact directly on pedagogy, on what happens in classrooms. At the risk of being over-simplistic, one could say that the often heard cry of the teacher of English, 'Now I want you to get into groups,' can only be properly understood if it is seen as implicating a set of underlying values which would include the following:

- People can learn from each other, they do not always need aleader or teacher.
- Developing an ability to work autonomously is important.
- The process of working things out together is more important than knowing any single correct answer.
- There may be no correct answer.
- You can solve your own problems by defining them, gathering the relevant information, and sharing it constructively.

These are values which, if expressed openly and acted on outside the classroom, could get a person into serious trouble in many countries. It is not a coincidence that TESOL has developed a methodological approach based on these values. Nor, I suggest, is it so much as a result of SLA research as it is an expression of the way that we want to live. Who is this, "we"? Well, anyone who wants to sign up to these values. Is this ideological neo-imperialism? Well, it's not far off.

If you find that I'm going too far here, you might, at a quieter moment, like to read a (1993) paper by Earl Stevick called Social meanings for how we teach.

He goes through two possible ways of using a picture-plus-dialogue piece of material, and draws out the kinds of subliminal message which learners might receive from the variations in method. In one case, the message might be along the lines that

- Someone has decided that it is good for me to learn these forms by copying them.
- Any contribution from my life or experience is going to get in the way of efficient learning.
- The teacher and the book are the sources of knowledge and power.
- The most important issues here are accuracy and correctness.
- Another approach might be more likely to suggest:
- My experience and knowledge is important here.
- My creativity is valued by my teacher and my colleagues.
- I shall have to take some responsibility for evaluating my progress.
- Making mistakes is OK, and I can learn from them.

Of course, one cannot simply tie values to techniques, but values will find their expression, some approaches will be more amenable than others, and there is a cumulative effect of the regular practice of what becomes 'usual.'

My point is that I can see why some people would call work in this latter mode an attempt to introduce disruptive values into other people's societies. We may talk about a "free market", but there is not much freedom for individuals or countries at the present historical moment about whether or not to learn English. The commercial and military facts of life suggest that it is a sensible means to one's own ends.

And to the extent that English is taught in the ways devised and spread by the travelling TESOL community, and others trained in its ways, the teaching will either introduce the values on which it has been based, or it will make no sense and wither away. I believe that we see both outcomes all around us.

A difficulty for me is that, once again, I am who I am and, as a person-who-teaches, this necessarily value-laden approach is what I have to offer. I want to work sensitively with people from other cultures, with other values, and I am certainly prepared to amend my teaching in order to make it acceptable (indeed, comprehensible) to people from other backgrounds. Obviously, if I think I am sending signals which are meant to encourage creativity, in a situation where students are understanding that I am a teacher who is not properly in

control of what they are supposed to be doing, I am not working well as any kind of teacher. But it is likely that, whatever 'compromises' (note the word) I make in order to teach, I shall probably also be working to move the students in a direction which will allow me to be the best teacher which I believe I can be. I mean that to be understood as an admission, not as a boast. I hope to learn more. In the meantime, I hope that the open declaration of my values, and the linking of them with my teaching, will protect me against the charge of covert cultural neo-imperialism which I would otherwise acknowledge as justified. I declare the values - I can't really do any more.

These are certainly not straightforward questions and, moreover, some borders are more difficult than others.

I cannot pretend that there are not borders here which I will not cross. In our own field of operation, for example, I cannot extend my respect to people who would justify the killing of a translator because they felt that the book he translated was offensive to their religious beliefs, as was the fate of Professor Hitoshi Igarashi following the translation of The Satanic Verses. I regard his death to be a marker on the single most important cross-cultural border of my lifetime. In fact, even in this city of peace, I feel constrained to identify it as a potential battle line. Nor can I respect an attitude which attempts the covert export of ideology or religion under the cloak of language teaching - it seems to me that a test of one's sincerity is the explicit transparency of one's purpose.

These are not comfortable things to say, but I find it necessary to be honest about the border-crossings of which I am not capable, if I am to make sincere claims about the border-crossings of which I am.. We attempt to respect diversity as we meet it, and we attempt also to find the courage and the means, in Edward Said's (1994:63) resonant phrase, to 'speak truth to power.'

My map, then, is perhaps finally bounded by a sense of respect for difference and by transparency of purpose. I do not want to cross that boundary and live in areas where versions of truth, reality and correctness are decided by others, and then imposed on the rest of the population. I don't want to cooperate with people who pretend to be have one purpose in mind, but are secretly, in fact, committed to another. I am very keen to go on communicating with all these people. I believe that I can come to understand the situation better. But if the people I am communicating with believe that they already have all the answers, or that effective communication is possible without transparency of purpose, then the negotiations will be difficult. These are two of my limitations.

Still on my map, I have a terrain of borders between groups of people with different values and traditions, purposes and ways, who are nevertheless united by a respect for diversity, a desire to understand more, and a willingness to cooperate (Edge 1996a). This is where my personal narrative and my cross-cultural meditation come together.

### In-between-ness

In his quietly profound and elegant book, A Little Search For A Better World As A Basis for Education, Shigeki Kato writes that (1988:i) 'An idea is none the less valuable for being told again so long as it is of true value.'

I have no doubt that the idea I wish to repeat to you is of true value; you will have to judge how well I tell it, and the appropriacy of the telling.

Our prevailing image of crossing borders is of moving from one area, or stage to another. That is certainly the way I have used the expression so far. Yet a great deal of contemporary writing on culture (e.g. Bhabha 1994, Maclure 1996, Said 1993: 395-408) stresses the importance of in-between-ness, of new hybrids which do not resolve themselves in terms of either-or-ness. The musicians whom we heard at the beginning of this talk did not come together in order to play Japanese, or Senegalese, or American music; they came together in order to shift the location of culture out of those old settings. As I have already said, I live somewhat dislocated from the culture that originally produced me, and I like it here. I feel empathy with those who live in the spaces between borders, and work to dissolve those borders, as well as with those who cross them.

Whether we see ourselves as taking on one of these roles or both, it is in these border areas that we, by definition, live and work. As human beings, we cross borders in order to do that work. As teachers, let us pause to think of our title once more: crossing borders focuses less on borders to be crossed, or borders having been crossed, than on the process of crossing, the brief verbal act caught up in an eternity of nominalisation. The inspirational image which comes to my mind is that of the bodhisattva known in Japan, I believe, as Mi-kaeri Kannon. As I know the story, having achieved enlightenment, she paused on the threshold of nirvana and looked back. Empathising with the rest of humanity left behind, she remained (and remains) there, on the threshold, not quite crossing over, in order to ensure that the gateway remains open for others. Probably the most transcendent vision of in-betweenness that we have available.

I am not so presumptuous as to suggest that we can hold open the gates of heaven, but I am attracted by our potential role in keeping open, and sometimes perhaps even helping to dissolve the borders on earth. That is the old idea I wished to repeat, and the image with which I should like to leave you.

Thank you.

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# Opening Borders with World Englishes: Theory in the classroom

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## Introduction[1]

In the title of this paper I am using the dynamic metaphor "opening borders" in a specific sense consistent with my earlier conceptualization of world Englishes. The concept of "opening borders" with world Englishes is not quite identical to how this metaphor has been used in current debate in, for example, the USA. When Lawrence W. Levine addresses this issue, in his *The Opening of the American Mind* (1996), he is essentially providing arguments against the positions of, for example, Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987) and a series of such books by D'Souza (1991), Bennett (1992) and Bernstein (1994)—to name just three.

I would like to provide arguments for the use of the fast-increasing body of world Englishes as a resource, as a key, to crossing borders and barriers of various types—cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and social. This important dimension of English is, I believe, relevant to the major focus of this year's JALT Convention.

There are also pragmatic and ideological dimensions to world Englishes: these are *multicanonicity* and *multiculturalism*. These two important components are not generally being articulated in our profession. There is a variety of ideological, economic, and political motivations for that lack of attention. This ominous silence is particularly marked in what Susan Butler has called "the ELT empire" (1996).

In what has been called the post-Imperial period, the ELT Empire has acquired unparalleled power. There are now several serious and well-documented studies which discuss how various active strategies are used to sustain, stabilize, and maintain that power (see, e.g., Kachru 1986a and 1986b, Pennycook 1994, Phillipson 1992, Tollefson 1995, Tsuda 1994a and 1994b).

But turning to the various dimensions of the multicanonicity and multi-culturalism of world Englishes and their relevance to opening borders, I have in mind the following:

- The cross-cultural and pluricentric functions of English;
- The concept "speech community" of English, which is erroneously believed to be essentially monolithic, but in reality is pluralistic;
- The broad theoretical frameworks that were traditionally used for defining language acquisition, language transfer, and language acculturation; and
- The relationship of this altered conceptualization to pedagogical goals and to the ELT profession.

This indeed is a broad canvas. I will only peripherally touch the issues that these dimensions of English raise. There is now an increasing body of conceptual and empirical studies which bring African, Asian, and other perspectives to this debate.

I am using the term "borders" in the rather specific sense of the barriers which stand between us and *other*. And here *other* may be defined in linguistic, cultural, and, indeed, ideological terms. These characteristics create, as we have seen, psychological, attitudinal, and other borders—both real and imaginary. It is these borders which are difficult to cross over. The difficulties are partly imaginary, and to a large extent motivated by underlying

ideological, conceptual reasons. But there is more to it. There are issues of power and economic interests involved here. We should not ignore the fact that, as *The Times* (24 Oct. 1989, p.14) reported, "Britain's real black gold is not North sea oil, but the English language. . . ." Britain is "selling English by the pound" (ibid). And the USA and Australia are not far behind in this commercialism.

Let me consider the specific case of Japan. In Japan, when the demand is made for "internationalization," the underlying motivation is to find means to cross the borders of the types I just mentioned—to open intellectual windows, as it were, to let ideas of other cultures come into Japan, to establish channels of understanding and communication across cultures.

And the search for discovering a "key" to initiate such linguistic cross-over is not only recent. As we know, it is this search for a "key" for cross-cultural and crosslinguistic communication that has motivated proposals for a variety of constructed artificial languages.

In the past, various visionaries have constructed over six hundred such languages, which include Esperanto (1887) by a Polish physician; Volapük (1880) by a German bishop; Ido (1907) by a French logician; Interlingua by an Italian mathmatician; and Novial by the Danish linguist Otto Jesperson. And such attempts have not as yet been abandoned, the latest one being Lincos, "a language for cosmic intercourse" (Freudenthal 1960, B. Kachru 1992 [2nd Ed.]). What actually has happened, however, is that, in spite of this bounty of proposals, we have failed to develop such a "culture-free" artificial language.

There is, however, one *natural* language which has now acquired that cross-cultural identity—that is English, the linguistic "key" which is being used for opening borders. At some places, and by some, this border-crossing is done with exhilaration and with excitement. At other places, cross-cultural use of English is carried on with agony, and because of some pragmatic necessity and the success promised by the language. One thing, however, is clear: that English has acquired cultural identities which no other language has acquired in the past.

And with such functions of English, the linguistic center of the language has already moved—slowly, gradually, but certainly—from its former major linguistic epicenter, from its traditional center of creativity, of innovations and, I might add, of authority of codification.

And now we—all of us—can use this key for crossing cultural and linguistic borders, but only if we make a distinction between English as a medium and English as a repertoire of pluralism. A repertoire of ideologies, of ways of life and living in distinctly different cultural contexts, and of thought patterns and creativities—and, indeed, of innovations which articulate various types of cross-overs: the African, the Asian, the South and North American, and the East European.

The medium refers to the form of the language, and the messages are those of diverse cross-cultural functions. However, it is the medium—the linguistic form—that has undergone the process of internationalization. The medium has acquired diverse and multiple functional conventions; it has acquired new meanings by its functions in diverse traditions and cultures—in Asia, in Africa, and in other parts of the world. And when we say that English is "global," or "international," or "universal," what we are indeed referring to is the repository of diversity: It is in this sense that English is British, Scottish, American, Singaporean, Indian, Philippino and, yes, Japanese.

What we share as members of the international English-using speech community is the medium—the vehicle for the transmission of the pluralistic messages of Englishes. We use the phonetic medium when we speak to each other. We use the graphic medium when we write to each other. The medium *per se*, however, has no constraints on what message—cultural, social, or ideological—we transmit through it. And through this shared medium we transmit multiple culturally constructed messages and diverse views on life and values.

When we call English an *international* medium, what we mean is that those who use English across cultures have a shared code of communication. The medium provides, as it were, shifting "grids"



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through which we gain access to a variety of Western and non-Western cultures, ideologies, mythologies, philosophies, and other sociocultural contexts. We see this acculturation of the medium in, for example, West African varieties of English. In this region, as Okara says, English is used "to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way" (1963: 15-16).

This code is used and molded on its users' terms. We indeed share in our uses of English a large inventory of the sound system, the vocabulary, and the syntax. The result of this shared competence is that, in spite of various types of differences, we believe that we communicate with each other—one user of English with the other—the Australian with an Indian, a Japanese with a German, and a Singaporean with a North American. It is in this broad sense of intercultural interlocutors that we have one language, one medium, and multiple voices; as India's C.D. Narasimhaiah says, "English has been an effective aid to thinking globally while choosing to live locally. . ." (1991: viii).

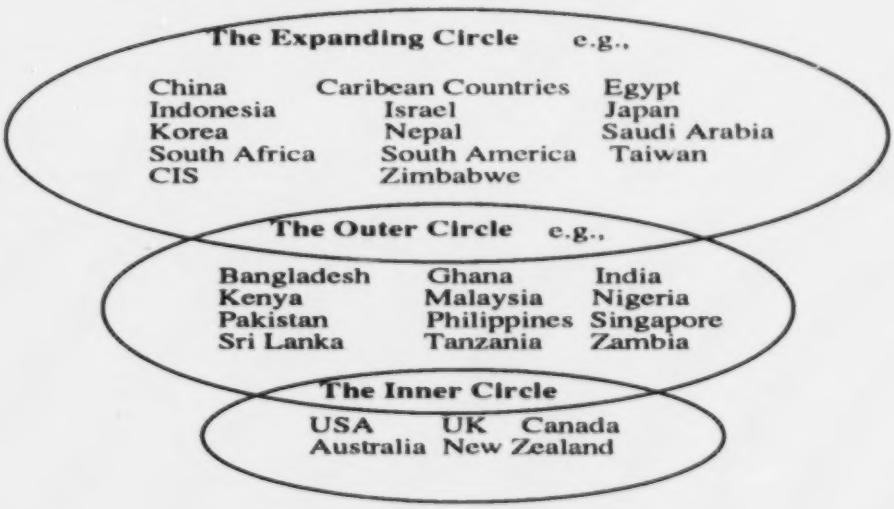
I have characterized the users of English in terms of the following three Concentric Circles (see Kachru 1985 and later).

## Pluricentricity and Interculturalism

There are indeed serious implications of the above conceptualization of English in the world context. One major, and far-reaching, implication is the PLURICENTRICITY of the language. That is, English has a multiplicity of norms—both endocentric and exocentric—multiple identities in creativity, and distinct sociolinguistic histories and contexts for function. In other words, it is now more apt to use the term "Englishes" than "English." The speech community of English is, then, of two broad types. I have labeled these as *norm-providing* and *norm-dependent*.

In the first group one traditionally included, for example, the USA, the UK, and Australia. Now—and this is important—one has to include the varieties of English which are used essentially as *additional* languages—additional to one, two, or more other languages, as in India, Nigeria, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines. The pluricentricity of English is, of course, not unique. There are, indeed, several other languages of wider communication which share this characteristic with English, e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, and Korean. The pluricentricity of English, however, as

**Three Concentric Circles of Englishes**



compared with that of other languages of wider communication, is unprecedented and overwhelming in linguistic history. Its nonnative users are substantially more than numerous than its native users.

The spread of English and its intercultural uses raise daunting questions concerning diversification, codification, identities, cross-cultural intelligibility, and power and ideology. The increasing power of English has rightly been equated with the proverbial Aladdin's lamp—a medium that opens doors to other cultures, a repository of functions and ideologies with no regional frontiers.

The language is used internationally, and in that sense it is an *international* language. But that term is somewhat misleading. These international uses have not resulted in an international variety of English: There is no *International English*. Earlier proposals for such an INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH—structurally simplified and culturally neutral—actually did not go very far—e.g., Basic English, Nuclear English, and Utilitarian English. Thus, the pluralistic vision of English is in its international culturally constructed *functions*, not in a homogeneous international *form*.

The unprecedented nature of the diffusion of English, as compared with that of other languages of wider communication—past and present—is in its unique global profile. Its major characteristics are:

- that there are now at least four nonnative speakers of English for every native speaker who use English as a second or an additional language—third, fourth, and so on;
- that, in the Outer Circle, India is the third-largest English-using country, with over 40 million English users using English as an additional language;
- that, in the Expanding Circle, China has over 200 million EFL users with some competence in English;
- that extensive creativity in English in various literary genres exists on every continent;
- that almost every major town in Anglophone Asia and Africa has at least one newspaper in English and a local radio station transmitting news in English;
- that, in various parts of the world, English has standard (educated) *local* varieties (acrolects), and a range of other varieties (mesolects), and "mixed" varieties with specific names (e.g., basilect, Nigerian pidgin, Singlish, Tex-Mex, Bazaar English); and
- that the initiatives in planning, administration, and funding for the spread of bilingualism in English is essentially in the hands of local people.

It is, indeed, obvious that this global profile of English distinguishes it from other languages of wider communication.

## Medium vs. Messages

This pluralism of the language has come at a price: And how high the price is depends on whom one talks to. There is an articulate group who agonize over the recognition of the multiculturalism and multiple identities of the language. Their concern is that the language is drifting from its exclusive Eurocentric, Judeo-Christian, and Western identity. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is warning us about such people when he says that cultural pluralism "is not, of course, everyone's cup of tea" (Gates, Jr. 1992: xvi). It certainly is not the cup of tea of "vulgar cultural nationalists" such as Allan Bloom and Leonard Jeffries, who "correctly identify it as the enemy." Gates, Jr. has more to say:

> These polemicists thrive on absolute partitions: between "civilization" and "barbarism," between "black" and "white," between a thousand versions of Us and Them. But they are whistling in the wind.

The "cultural nationalists" are reacting against the variety of the faces—the colors—of English users from various regions, against those who use the language with varied competencies and associate it with diverse canons. These faces are not dormant and inarticulate; they are articulate in giving their own meanings to English; they use

English in their own socialization processes and with well-defined agendas.

These "loose canons," as Gates, Jr. characterizes them, invoke reactions of various types, and the result is what we see now: "culture wars," and strategies for domination. These come in various forms, one such form in Japan being "The English conversation ideology" (*eikaiwa*). I have discussed this in detail elsewhere (Kachru 1996).

## Dimensions Of Pluralism And Expansion Of The Canon

One might ask: Why is it important that ELT specialists in JALT and other professional organizations recognize these dimensions of pluralism and multicanonicity of English? I believe that the interculturalism of English—its contacts and convergences—is unique in linguistic history.[2] The cross-cultural functions have altered the traditional regions of contact for English in a very marked way: These are now not only German, French, Italian, and Spanish, but include Chinese, Hausa, Hindi, Japanese, Malay, Tagalog, Thai, Yoruba, and so on (see B. Kachru 1994c).

The infusion of pluralistic linguistic energy in the language does not come only from its traditional linguistic partners—French, German, Italian, and a host of Scandinavian languages. The altered circumstances—historical, cultural, political, and linguistic—have opened up the language, as it were, to the non-Western world: a world of cultural and linguistic contexts entirely alien to the earlier sociocultural and linguistic history of the language. It is here that West Africa, East Africa, South Asia, West Africa, and the Philippines—to name just a handful of regions—become relevant to the confluence and expanding interculturalism of English. That is how varied streaks of pluralism have been added to the language. We see this indeed in Africa's Nguũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Nuruddin Farah, Chinua Achebe, and Buchi Emecheta; in Caribbean's Sam Selvon, Roy Heath; in South Asia's Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Anita Desai, Bapsi Sidhwa, Shashi Tharoor, and Rohinton Mistry; in East Asia's Edwin Thumboo, Shirley Lim, Lloyd Fernando, and Cathrine Lim; in New Zealand's Witi Ihimaera; in North America's Rolando Hinojosa, and Sandra Cisneros; and Scotland's James Kelman. This is what I mean by multicultural strands and innovations—the canvas is large and includes an abundance of cultures and types of creativity in one medium—English. The question is: Does this dimension of world Englishes reflect in our "ELT Empire", in our curricula, in our conceptualizations, and in our teacher training?

There is nothing intrinsic in the language—in English—that made it "intercultural" or "multicultural." That change in the functions of English was not even on the educational or political agenda of the colonizers. That, of course, is another story, and I will not go into it here. The language acquired its intercultural components from its uses by many different groups on distant continents, for diverse cultural and interactional needs. With each new context of use, English gained new identities. Once these identities were institutionalized, the distance between one canon and another canon of English became larger and larger. Thus, the intercultural identities of English are not always the result of conscious planning. However, the consequence of such intercultural identities has been the internationalization of the language.

## Exponents Of The Institutionalization Of Pluralism

The intercultural identities of English are expressed in many subtle ways, one overlapping with the other, and each contributing to distinct canons within one shared medium, which also manifests various cultural and linguistic identities—Asian and African. We have to be aware of these exponents of English as a key to crossing borders. We have to be aware of four major exponents of such *distinctiveness* in order to bring out the intercultural identities of the language.

The first exponent is *variety specific nomenclature*. That includes attitudinal, formal, and other markers that localize a variety of English, e.g., Nigerian in Nigerian English or *Singaporean* in Singaporean English, and so on. The second is the processes of *acculturation of the variety* as reflected in localized sociocultural and

interactional contexts. The third is *institutionalized discourse strategies and speech acts* which are not necessarily shared with the Inner Circle.
The fourth is alteration of—or innovations in—*textual texture* due to use of English in multilingual contexts.

These strands of intercultural identities have one thing in common: They represent the multilingual's creativity. The multilingual's slices of experience are often structured in his/her dominant language and recreated in English. This creativity differs from traditionally accepted norms of English in many ways. First, the drift of the text is toward another canon. This point has been repeatedly illustrated by the texts of Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, Chinua Achebe, and others. In Raja Rao's later work we see essentially the Vedantic tradition and the Sanskritization of the style. It is consistent with the ideological and metaphysical context of the Sanskritic tradition in which Rao wrote, for example, *The Serpent and the Rope*.

India's Rao and Nigeria's Achebe are two early writers from the Outer Circle who articulated their positions about their conscious identity-shifts in their use of English. They launched their credos for creativity with sensitivity and great vision—Rao as early as 1938 (see Kachru 1988c). The creativity in such texts has been explained within various frameworks, including those of translation, transfer, transcreation, and relexification (see Kachru 1995 and earlier; Oyeleye 1995; see also Y. Kachru 1987).

The main characteristic of such writing is that of hybridization, both in linguistic innovations and contextualization. It is through this "hybridity" that the text becomes intercultural. In other words, the medium is displaced or recontextualized from its traditional underlying presuppositions—literary, cultural, and ideological.

When Soyinka (1993: 88) refers to the "unaccustomed roles" of English in Africa, he is referring to such a "reincarnation" of the language. This, as he says, has turned the language into "a new medium of communication." In the African context, then, English confronts, in Soyinka's words, "a new organic series of mores, social goals, relationships, universal awareness—all of which go into the creation of a new culture" (1993: 88).

Soyinka's point is put in a larger perspective of a writer and his/her context by Achebe (1992: 34):

> Most African writers write out of an African experience and of commitment to an African destiny. For them that destiny does not include a future European identity for which the present is but an apprenticeship.

But context is only the raw material. One has to recreate it into the text and reshape the medium to reflect it.

This takes me to what I have termed "the bilingual's creativity" (1987). A major source for such creativity is the multilingual context in which English functions as an additional language. Nguõgiõ (1992: 34; see alsoJussawalla, et al., 1992) illustrates this point in the context of Kenya, where Swahili is the lingua franca and there are "national languages" such as Gikuyu and Luo: "By playing with this situation, you can get another level of meaning through the interaction of all three languages."

On the other hand, Soyinka emphasizes the role experimentation can play in the use of "medium as the weapon." He believes that

> [b]lack people twisted the linguistic blade in the hands of the traditional cultural castrator and carved new concepts into the flesh of white supremacy.

The result, says Soyinka, is "the conversion of the enslaving medium into an insurgent weapon" (1993: 88).

The conversion of the medium into an "insurgent weapon" results in demythologization processes of various types. It takes us into legitimation of the bilinguals' creativity and into the underlying cultural contexts of the "loose canons" of world Englishes. A number of such "loose canons" are well institutionalized: African-American, West African, South African, South Asian, Southeast Asian—to name just five.

These "loose canons" have yet to enter

the portals of what is considered the sacrosanct territory of traditional English departments. There are well-articulated attempts by the custodians of canonicity in English to protect the Western canon: there is a call for "reclaiming our heritage" and a rally to protect the purity of the canon from African, Asian, and Hispanic or African-American intruders. It is here that JALT and its membership can open borders through a variety of initiatives: by "opening," as it were, the curriculum to these intercultural dimensions of English; and by making such an endeavor a part of what in Japan is termed the "internationalization campaign."

## Culture Wars And "Loose Canons"

I have briefly mentioned the unprecedented diffusion of English in terms of its *range* and *depth*: one referring to the intercultural functional range of the language and the other to its societal penetration as varieties within a variety—from acrolect to basilect to local pidgins. However, this intercultural nature of English, the multiculturalism represented in the medium and its message, continue to be marginalized. There are a variety of reasons for this.[3]

One major reason for the continued marginalization of varieties of English is the mythology that has been popularized about English, its acquisition, its messages, and its functions. I have earlier talked about these myths in various contexts earlier. And now, in the context of the JALT convention and its focus, I am specifically thinking of just four myths which are relentlessly maintained and cultivated in the profession, and which, in my view, block the crossing of borders, and supress the multiculturalism of English.

*The interlocutor myth*: That English is primarily learned to communicate with the native speakers of the language (American, British, Australian). The sociolinguistic fact is that most of the interaction in English takes place among and between those who use it as an additional language, for example, Japanese with Singaporeans, Nigerians with Indians, Germans with Taiwanese, Koreans with Chinese, and so on.

*The monoculture myth*: That English is learned to understand American or British culture: That motivation is only partly true. In reality, one major function of English teaching in Asia and Africa is to impart native cultural values and traditions in culturally and linguistically pluralistic societies. English is thus used as a vehicle for integrative functions in a national sense (see, e.g., the statements of Chinua Achebe, Raja Rao, Wole Soyinka, and Gabriel Okara given above).

*The model dependency myth*: That EXOCENTRIC models of American or British varieties of English are actually taught and learnt in the global context. In reality, the ENDOCENTRIC (local) models provide major linguistic input. However, one must recognize that there is serious confusion among the users of English between what is *perceived* to be the norm and actual linguistic behavior.

*The cassandra myth*: That diversification and variation in English across cultures is an indicator of linguistic decay, and that controlling the decay is the job of native speakers as teachers of English literature and language and as ESL professionals and professional organizations who are involved in the spread and promotion of English under various guises. The debate on this question still continues in all the circles of English (see, e.g., Bailey 1990).
These myths keep us from considering the intercultural creativity in English(es) within an appropriate paradigm of pluralism.

There is more to these "culture wars" than the above myths show. There are further strategies being designed to use English as a linguistic export commodity for national, cultural, and economic interests. There are questions being asked about the "ownership" of the language. One specimen of such "culture wars" is found, for example, in Roger Bowers, Assistant Director-General of the British Council. He says that "the promotion of the English language is absolutely central" as one of the "Charter obligations" of the British Council (see Bowers, 1995: 88). And he continues

> we want to maintain the position of the English language as a world

> language so that it can serve on the widest possible stage as the vehicle for our national values and heritage. . . . along with those of other English-speaking nations.

Bowers further observes that:

> Now this begins to sound like linguistic imperialism, and if Braj Kachru were here, he would strongly object (as he has in the past) to putting national before supranational interests and to placing commerce before philosophy.

It is this same tone of "national values and heritage" that we find in the USA, in Australia, and so on. The problem is that in the curriculum of ELT and in teacher training the medium does not receive equal opportunity to represent all these diverse cultural strands in the language.

## Discourse Of Marginality And Paradigm Gap

The interculturalism in English as a societal, literary, and pedagogical concept has generally been perceived as a divisive practice and as an intrusion on the conventions of the canon. It has been seen as a step toward linguistic Balkanization and as a threat to the Western canon. The variationist and multiculturalist approaches have been attacked as "liberation linguistics" and as off-shoots of "liberation theology," and innovations in creativity in Asian and African Englishes have been characterized as "planned, managed, and promulgated by those who support a new tongue for new times" (Bailey 1990: 86).

What we see is that intercultural creativity suffers from an identity crisis. We still do not have appropriate labels for it. The labels we use seem to be like loaded weapons: Terraanglia, Third world literature, Colonial literature, Post-colonial literature, and Commonwealth literature.

## Traditional Canonicity Vs. Interculturalism

What is the major issue, then? It is one of conflict between a traditional concept of canonicity and a new concept of interculturalism. It is also a conflict between the sanctity attributed to some terminological sacred linguistic cows such as "speech community," "native speaker," "norm," and "standard." In the specific case of English and in the conceptualization of world Englishes, these concepts need redefining.

The concept of multi-canons and resultant interculturalism in world Englishes is in conflict with the traditional notion of what constitutes a canon. The first point relates to diversity, a concept that is generally being viewed as an initiator of chaos—linguistic and cultural. This attitude is clearly reflected in earlier research on bilingualism and multilingualism in the USA and is much discussed with reference to the "melting pot" hypothesis. Canada, Belgium, India, and Nigeria are thus viewed as cases of linguistic anarchy.

Up to the 1950s the research of academics in the USA on bilingualism and its limitations have not helped the situation. The same attitude was present in earlier debates on code alteration. This takes me to the second point, that of intense negativism about bilingualism and pluralism, and about societies where such descriptions apply.

A partial list of such negative attitudes includes:

- that pluralistic societies are complex and their descriptions present explanatory complexities;
- that writing grammars is difficult anyway, but writing descriptions of bilinguals' grammars is *extremely* complicated;
- that homogeneity and uniformity should be emphasized in linguistic and cultural descriptions;
- that language "mix" and "switch" are attitudinally unacceptable, and violate linguistic "purism";
- that diversity—social, cultural, linguistic—essentially leads to chaos;
- that bilingual groups are considered marginal and problem generating; and
- that bi/multilingualism contributes to retarding materialistic growth.

## Shifting The Paradigm

What I said above is only part of the story. However, the most complex part is initiating paradigm shift. There are several direct and indirect ways by which such a shift can be initiated. They directly relate to developing awareness and engaging in a fresh conceptualization of the field and in applied research. These two dimensions are not mutually exclusive. The following list includes some aspects which we need to emphasize:

- sociolinguistic profiles within a theoretical conceptualization of world Englishes (see Kachru 1992b [1994b] and Sridhar 1986);
- pragmatics of a variety within a variety (e.g., Nigerian Pidgin, basilects, Bazaar Hindi-Urdu);
- range of functions and domains, and depth in terms of the social penetration of varieties of English, and their implications on choices of appropriate styles, registers, and discourse strategies (Kachru 1988a);
- contrastive discourse and its pragmatics in interactional contexts, specifically related to identity, self, and acculturation;
- multilingual's "mixing" and "switching" within multidimensionality of identities; and
- the implication of research on intelligibility and the importance of the "Smith triad" (see Smith 1992).

## Conclusion

What I have attempted to do here is to raise some provocative and, indeed, challenging questions: These questions relate to those dimensions of English which our professional training does *not* include and which professional organizations do *not* put on their agendas. By such omissions we deprive ourselves—as professionals and as learners of English—of an abundant multicultural resource articulated via one medium, and of the innovations in multilingual's creativity expressed in world Englishes.

Let me engage here in self-plagiarism and repeat what I have said in JALT's *The Language Teacher* of October 1996:

> By marginalizing the global uses of English, we are walling in an important world vision for which world Englishes have become an important resource. What is needed is a pluralistic vision of models, norms, and canons that will use this immense, unparalleled resource with sensitivity and understanding—locally and cross-culturally. I have used here two crucial words: sensitivity and understanding. Sensitivity requires that the self-proclaimed custodians of the canon much recognize the appropriations of what Gates, Jr. (1992) has termed "loose canons," though Gates specifically focuses on the African-American canon. Understanding requires that the profession recognizes the importance of the varieties of English, their creativity and literary traditions, their unique functions, their vibrant, distinct voices, and the relevance of these voices to teaching, to curriculum, and to broader conceptualizations of English studies.
>
> The present challenge of world Englishes can not be met with earlier paradigms of language teaching and methodology and curriculum. We have to redesign the world of English studies—and that applies as much to the Inner Circle as to other Circles of English. The diffusion of English challenges the sacred linguistic and literary cows of the profession: we have to redefine concepts such as "speech community," "native speaker," and "communicative competence" for English in a global context. That indeed is a great challenge to our profession in 1990s.

## Notes

1. This paper incorporates several points discussed in detail in Kachru 1991, 1992a and b, 1994a and b, and 1995. A comprehensive overview of the topic is presented in Kachru ed. 1992b, and a state-of-the-art is discussed in Kachru 1992 [1994b].
2. For an extensive discussion and case studies see *World Englishes in Contact and Convergence*, special issue of *World Englishes*, 1993, 13:2.
3. In several of my recent papers, I have discussed this point with reference to various myths, myth-makers, and the

discourse of marginality that has resulted from these myths (see particularly 1992a and 1994a). One must also question the use of some of the sacred linguistic cows with reference the users of English around the world, for example, the terms speech community, native speaker and so on (see Kachru 1988b).

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